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Letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General*

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine of 1 September 2017 on the blocking of the activities of the sole temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate by the Russian occupation authorities in Crimea (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on blocking the activities of the sole temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate by the Russian occupation authorities in Crimea

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine condemns blocking of the activities of the Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Princes Vladimir and Olga temple, the sole and only acting temple in Simferopol of the Crimean Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, by the occupation authorities on August 31, 2017.

The Russian occupation authorities continue their policy aimed at hindering the activities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) on the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and is doing everything possible to stop its activities on the territory of Crimea. The capture of church premises has been carried out on the peninsula, its property is illegally seized, searches are carried out in its premises, and pressure is being exerted on clergymen since the beginning of the occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. Such actions of the occupation authorities are systematic violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, in particular freedom of conscience and religion, norms of international law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine demands from the Russian Federation to restore unhindered access of the UOC-KP believers to the temple in Simferopol immediately, to stop religious persecution and interference in the activities of the Crimean eparchy of the UOC-KP and to ensure fulfillment of obligations under international law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine calls upon the international community, in particular the European Union and its member states, the United States, Canada and other democratic countries, international organizations, in particular the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OSCE to condemn the attack on the Ukrainian temple in Simferopol.